NICHOLAS JOSS
1772-1836

and

BARBARA AEBERSOLD JOSS
1789-1864

AND THEIR CHILDREN

Swiss Immigrants and Pioneer Settlers
of
Walnut Creek Township, Holmes County, Ohio

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Farewell to Bern

On May 4, 1831, Nicholas[1] and Barbara Joss and their four children left Zaziwyl[2] in the Canton of Bern, Switzerland, on a trip with momentous consequences for their many descendants in America. Nicholas was the leader of 13 Swiss families, comprising 75 men, women, and children, who had made the fateful decision to abandon the ties of family, friends, church, and close-knit community to seek a better life in the new world.[3] They had disposed of homes, household goods, tools and equipment, keeping only what they believed would be needed for the trip and their new start on the Ohio frontier. They were severely limited by what they could carry with them. Each family had a wagon pulled by a team of horses. Their destination was Paris where they would arrange transportation by boat to the French port of LeHavre. At LeHavre they would arrange transportation by ship to New York.[4]

Nicholas Joss was 59 years old when he left his native land, rather old for the strenuous journey which lay ahead.[5] His wife at 41 was 18 years his junior.[6] They were married July 6, 1812, and their oldest child Nicholas Frederick "Fritz" was 18 years old, Anna Elizabeth, age 15[7], followed by Johnny, age 13, and Daniel, age 7.

Nicholas was a school teacher at Oberthal near Grosshochstettin, and had served in the legislature of Canton Bern. We are told that he emigrated because he became dissatisfied with the corruption in public affairs.[8]

This explanation is easier said than understood. What really caused this man and those that came with him to forsake the land which they loved? Here was a recognized leader who had achieved a measure of success in his life, and was not only highly regarded but relatively well off. Why would such a man, at a time when most men his age are thinking of retirement, invest most of his savings in the cost of transportation to an unknown land where he would be starting all over on a relatively uncivilized frontier.

Troubled Switzerland

Here is what the history books say about the Switzerland of those days: In 1798 Napoleon invaded Switzerland and established the Helvitian Republic. Before that time Switzerland had been a loose confederation of independent self-governing cantons under aristocratic rule. After Napoleon was defeated at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the Congress at Vienna restored the Swiss confederation. Between 1815 and 1830 Switzerland experienced grave internal confusion and disunity. Each canton sought to reestablish its independence, minting its own money and imposing its own customs, and in some of the cantons the old aristocratic families sought to reestablish the power which they previously had held. British textile manufacturers established their advantages in the world market which hurt those areas of Switzerland which depended upon textile manufacturing. Wages were low and unemployment high.[9]

Another Swiss who left his homeland for America ten years before probably expressed the feelings of Nicholas Joss and the rest of his party about the future of themselves and their children in Switzerland:

> "I could see that in spite of anything I might save in the costs of food and clothing we were always going backwards. The high cost of living, the unemployment of the time, and the increasing somber outlook for the future multiplied my worries. I made many plans and experienced many a depressing hour.
>
> I knew many who despite the difficult times were getting ahead and whose prospects were promising. Sometimes this was the result of an extraordinary frugality combined with the ability to endure almost anything. Sometimes it was the skill of squeezing and sucking out whatever remained to be squeezed or sucked when there was no longer any meat. The first I could not do, and the second I would not do. I saw many others who despite their industriousness came daily closer to bankruptcy. Sometimes they were not even aware of what was happening to them and so almost unaware tumbled into poverty. I saw how such a state of affairs worked to the detriment of morality. I observed and heard a philosophy become commonly held which in other times one

would have been ashamed to espouse. Not only did I fear the serious consequences that could arise directly out of my own situation, but I feared the general effect of such evil influences."

The Promise of the New World

It was not only the grim future which they saw for themselves in Switzerland, it was the promise of the new world which beckoned to them from America. Swiss had been coming to America for almost a hundred and fifty years at the time the Joss party left. Those first to come were the Mennonites and Amish who fled from Switzerland to avoid religious persecution. But later there were others coming for reasons such as those articulated above. There were letters from Swiss in America to relatives and friends in Switzerland. To many America was the land of opportunity, the place where someone through hard work could make something of himself.

The Swiss first came to Pennsylvania and together with Germans from Wurttemberg, Baden, and the Palitinate formed the "Pennsylvania Dutch" of Southeastern Pennsylvania. After the construction of the Erie Canal, which made travel from New York to Cleveland easy and inexpensive compared to the old wagon trip across the mountains, and after construction of the Ohio Canal which made travel south from Cleveland easy and inexpensive, Ohio became an attractive destination.

The Joss party had friends and relatives in Ohio who were urging them to join them. "Come to Captina on the Ohio River," they said.[10] "Land can be purchased from the government at $1.25 per acre. We will make a new Swiss community together in a land of opportunity free of all our homeland's troubles."

Paris and the French

Joss and his party traveled by horse-drawn wagons across France to Paris. Nicholas' impressions of France were unfavorable. "Little care is given to the soil, the crops, and the buildings and therefore there's no possible comparison with the Canton of Bern," he said.[11] He didn't even like the wine of France.

The Joss party arrived at Paris on May 22, which Nicholas described as a "Sodom." He noted at the Inn where they stayed that singing and dancing

went on until morning every night. Things were stolen out of several of their wagons. They were delayed in Paris because of all the emigrants from the German states of Baden, Bavaria, and Wurttemberger who had come for the purpose of emigrating to the new world. As a result they lost money on the sale of their horses and wagons because there were so many on the market. "Paris is as full of do-nothings as a farm room is full of flies in August and everyone says it just can't remain that way," he said.[12] He noted that "the costume of our Bernese women created quite a stir in France as well as in Paris - especially the pointed caps. In the cities and in the villages great crowds collected in order to see this sight."[13] The Swiss did enjoy their trips to the royal zoo, and Joss noted with pride the quays by the Louvre beneath the royal palaces where the Swiss guards had fought.

LeHavre

On June 4 they left Paris for LeHavre on a steamboat and arrived on the morning of June 7. In order to avoid dealing with agents who acted as the middlemen between the ship captains and the emigrants, and whom they quickly discovered were a nest of thieves, they negotiated directly with an American sea captain to rent his entire ship. His ship, the "Romulus von Braunschweig" was a large three-masted sailing ship, handsome and well-built. They were authorized to take 146 persons for which 50 beds were provided. Joss and two others paid the captain and then recouped their investment by selling passage to the rest of their party and the other emigrants. Joss was proud of the arrangement they had made because not only did they save money by eliminating the middleman, they were able to select who they would travel with and limit the number so that there would be plenty of fresh air. They were also able to buy their own food and drink at a substantial savings and an assurance of quality.

On June 29 they weighed anchor and slowly left the harbor. Before they were able to clear the harbor they were stopped by French officials who demanded one hundred francs because they had not obtained clearance from the naval department. Although realizing this was a shakedown, Joss paid the officials the money they demanded. At last they were free of the French.

As they sailed out of the harbor, Joss noted, "And thus we parted from our mother earth Europe. What a sensitive soul experiences and feels under such circumstances cannot be described. Yet my feelings were more happy

than sad."[14] He went on to say, "As soon as we were out of the hands of the French I felt better than I had for many years. I ate and drank everything with appetite and pleasure and more than I had done for a long time previously."[15]

The Voyage across the Atlantic

For 146 passengers they had 50 beds, double decker beds arranged over each other along the outside walls of the ship. This left a passage way between them so that one could pass comfortably. Joss explained how lucky they were to be on an American boat where the number of passengers was limited by the government, as compared to a French boat where people were stuffed together like sardines. The French boats had four rows of berths with no room in between. He also pointed out how they each received a pound and a half of wood and one measure of water per day, while on other ships the passengers received only a half pound of wood and half measure of water.[16]

Their voyage was for the most part a very pleasant one. They never had a dangerous storm. However, they did occasionally experience strong winds and more than once waves broke over the deck. But this frightened no one and they laughed when folks came down into the hold drenched to the skin. One of the waves reached Barbara Joss and her daughter Anna Elizabeth while they were cooking. Sometimes the ship would lean as a result of a cross wind so they would have to tie down their eating utensils during meals and even fasten down their chairs. At such times it was difficult for those in upper berths to keep from falling out of bed. Joss obviously enjoyed the trip, stating, "Throughout the entire sea voyage I myself had not a single unhealthy or boring hour."[17]

New York City

On August 8 they entered New York harbor. A pilot greeted them whose job it was to bring them into the harbor. Before they could disembark, they were inspected by a police official and sanitation official. In preparation for the inspection the captain had scrubbed down the hold and told them all to put on their best clothes and a happy face. All were called to the deck and counted. As soon as they were counted, permission to land was granted.[18]

Joss's description of New York is interesting from our twentieth century perspective. He reported that the population was supposed to be 200,000, and yet the density was much less than Paris, LeHavre, and even

Bern. The streets were well-paved. The houses were not very tall, and mostly red brick. He said, "In the city one sees not a single soldier nor policeman, let alone paid spies, and yet the entire city is clean and everything has its proper order. One sees no one who is not going about his business. Food stuffs are rather expensive. In the inns for breakfast as well as for the noon and evening meals, one usually is served two and three kinds of meats together with fish, salted butter and American cheese, very white bread, and coffee or tea according to ones desires. As yet, I have seen no wine. Yet mustard, oil, radishes, and cucumber salad stand on the table."[19]

Tragedy struck the group in New York. A toddler fell off the ship into the water between the ship and the pier and drowned. Joss earlier the same day had warned the child's grandfather that the family was not paying close enough attention to their children. "Almost the entire ship's company and many Americans who had come to the spot wept over the child," he said. "One is more concerned here with human life than in Paris."[20]

In New York they arranged for transportation by steamboat up the Hudson River to Albany, and from Albany to Buffalo by canal boat on the Erie Canal. On August 13 they left New York. The steamboat pulled their boat and two others up the river. They arrived in Albany on the evening of the 14th. Joss reported that Albany was an attractive industrial city with a population of 24,516. A German society was located there which rendered aid to German travelers in case of emergency.[21]

The Erie Canal

At Albany the Swiss party learned the deal they had made in New York for transportation to Buffalo was a bad one. They paid more than they would have paid had they simply booked passage to Albany, and then in Albany booked passage to Buffalo. Furthermore, they did not receive what they had been promised in New York. A controversy arose when the captain tried to force the passengers of the three boats which he had towed from New York into two canal boats. The Swiss finally agreed to pay $100 for an additional canal boat. They were promised wood for cooking, but no wood was provided, although they were able to find enough along the side of the canal to satisfy their needs. They were told that the boats would travel day and night with changes of horses, when in fact the same horses were used, and the boats stopped at night and twice during the day so that he horses

could rest and feed. At Rochester the boat men demanded their wages and the captain hid at his home in the city. He was arrested and all his possessions seized. Rather than wait around to seek redress through legal proceedings, the Swiss paid another company to take them the rest of the way to Buffalo. Instead of the trip to Buffalo taking 7 or 8 days as promised, it took 18 days.[22]

Joss reported some details of the trip which shed light on what it was like to travel by canal boat on the Erie Canal, which was at that time just six years old.[23] First, all their belongings had to be loaded on to the boat. Before starting, the boat was floated into a building. Then the water was let out and the boat settled down on a huge scale. This was done to weigh the boat so that the tariff could be calculated. Each boat was pulled by two horses driven by a young boy who sat on the second horse. When the boats would stop for the night or to feed the horses, passengers would run ashore. Some built fires for cooking; others looked for wood; and others ran about looking for water and milk. Each of the Swiss families would gather around its own fire, and if there was a village in the vicinity, crowds of curious Americans would gather around and watch the cooking. When they learned there were musicians among the Swiss, they asked them to play. When the music started, the crowd doubled in size. Joss noted, "As far as music is concerned, the Americans are very far behind."[24]

A near-tragedy occurred which illustrated the danger of the boats. Son Johnny Joss was walking from the front to the back of the boat on the bumper along the outside which protects the boat from collisions with the walls of the locks and other boats. He slipped and fell into the canal. His older brother Fritz jumped in after him fully clothed, but was not able to catch up with him. Therefore, he swam to the bank to take off his clothes. Johnny floated away, beating his arms mightily, but finally he began to give up and sink, and his father thought he was lost. Meanwhile the captain took off his clothes and jumped into the canal, swam after Johnny, and caught up with him just in time. By this time Fritz had joined them and both of them pulled Johnny to land. Joss reported, "You can imagine our joy over this fortunate salvation."[25]

Joss described Rochester as a newly laid-out city where all kinds of marvelous machines were at work and new ones were being built.[26] Buffalo was described as a city with a population of 6,353, which was very active commercially, and growing by leaps and bounds.[27]

Steamboat on Lake Erie

They arrived at Buffalo on August 31 after traveling all night. There they made arrangements to take a steamboat on Lake Erie to Cleveland, and left the next morning. They arrived at Cleveland on September 2.

From the diary of another group of Swiss who made the trip the same summer, we learn that a steamboat left every day from Buffalo for Cleveland, and that one could book passage in the cabin for $6.00 and be served meals, or one could sleep on deck without food for $2.50. Horses and wagons were also loaded on the boats. The boat traveled a mile to a mile and a half from the south shore of the lake. The forests came down to the lake shore broken here and there by a settlement. This Swiss immigrant's comment on his trip up the Erie Canal and on Lake Erie to Cleveland was, "No European who has not been here can have any idea of the pleasure of travel through the lively wilderness of America. The food on the canal boats and steamers is not only better than that of foremost cooks, it even exceeds the food of the larger restaurants, except that the wine is lacking and is made up for with whiskey, tea, and coffee. But the farmers here on the land must live best of all."[28]

The Ohio Canal

At Cleveland the Joss party rented two canal boats on the Ohio Canal to take them to LePort, near New Philadelphia, 93 miles away. One boat left the evening of September 4 and the other left the morning of September 5. The charge was $.01 per mile for each passenger over twelve. Children between 6 and 12 were half price, and children under 6 were free. The charge for luggage was $.25 per hundred pounds with the first hundred pounds free.[29] These prices were almost half of what the other Swiss group was charged during the same summer.[30]

The other Swiss diarist gives us a description of Cleveland at that time. The population was about 1,000. A steep street led upward from the river. Only warehouses stood along the water. The city had a magnificent view of the lake. It had only one important street bordered on both sides with brick houses. On the adjoining streets there were only a few buildings. The diarist noted that the canal was not finished at that time, only about 168 miles having

been completed, and that when it was finished, business would boom. At that time there were only about 60 canal boats.[31]

On both sides of the canal were forests with only a log cabin to be seen here and there. There were 44 locks between Cleveland and the hilltop at the little town of Akron 31 miles away. Just above the upper lock the canal led into a small lake that furnished the water for the canal.[32]

The canal passed by Zoar, lying on the right side of the canal. Here there were many Germans and Swiss, and vineyards from which wine was sold at $.40 a bottle. Many of the Zoar residents came from Suhr in Canton Argau. Here they saw roofing tiles of the type that they were familiar with from home.[33]

The Ohio Canal was about 40 feet wide and 6 to 7 feet deep. Along one or the other side there was a good path for the tow horses. The locks were built of stones and were only wide enough for one boat. If the crew was not careful, the boat could experience a mighty jar when they struck the wall of a lock, and the passengers could be thrown around. The greater danger was from the bridges. In many instances there was only a foot of headspace between the top of the boat and the bottom of the bridge. Usually there were many passengers on deck, and frequently they were absorbed in conversation or sightseeing. If they did not bend over or get down in time, they could be seriously hurt or killed. Three on the Joss boat were badly scratched up, and they heard that several lost their lives that summer on other boats.[34]

The Trip to Captina

The Joss party arrived at LePort on the morning of September 7. They loaded their belongings on wagons and had them taken to New Philadelphia, a mile away. There they rented three houses for the families that were still together. Twelve left for Captina the following day. No sooner had they left than a party of Swiss and Germans from Walnut Creek in Holmes County overtook them to welcome them to America. They traveled through Cadiz and St. Clairsville, and then on to Captina. Although the road to Captina was very poor, they did cross the National Road which was as good as the roads in Bern. They discovered Captina was a creek which flowed down a narrow valley into the Ohio River. After staying with the Swiss and German settlers in the area, and looking around to see what was available, two in the group

decided to stay and purchased land there. Niklaus Joss decided the land was much too hilly, the valley too narrow, and the fords across the Captina too difficult. He was favorably impressed with the fact that the community had already established a church and a school. He had already seen too many regions which were more attractive, so he had no desire to settle in Captina.[35]

On the way back to New Philadelphia, they saw their first Methodist Camp Meeting. Several hundred men and women were gathered in a small woods, where several men preached in loud voices at different places. A few in the audience who were inspired fell down and were carried to one side. Others screamed at the top of their voices. Here and there were places where food and drink was served. Joss was told that such a meeting usually lasts three or four days and nights without interruption. He said, "Since the 'tree' as it stood there wasn't entirely satisfactory to me, I naturally asked about the 'fruits' and with one voice I was assured that the majority of these people are very good and moral people."[36]

On the evening of September 20 they arrived back at New Philadelphia only to discover that several, including Anna Elizabeth Joss, were suffering with intermittent fever. It took her eight weeks to get over it. One girl died of it.[37] It was widely believed that the canals in low-lying and swampy areas where the water moved slowly were unhealthy in summer and caused the fever. Therefore, it was better not to live too close to the canals.[38]

Settlement at Walnut Creek

Before deciding where to settle Joss visited the Swiss in other areas, including Walnut Creek, Sugar Creek, Chippeway, and elsewhere. He observed that even though some of them had arrived from Switzerland heavily in debt, all were now more or less well off. He had yet to meet a single person who wished he were back in Europe.[39]

Finally he decided to buy a farm from Peter Showalter at the Walnut Creek settlement in Holmes County. The 150 acre farm was improved with three log cabins and a barn. Sixty acres were cleared and four acres were planted in fruit trees. The rest was woods. Along with the farm came a three-year old mare, two fat hogs, and three sheep, and nine acres planted in wheat. The farm cost him $1,000.[40]

In addition to the farm, he also bought two additional quarters of unimproved land from the government for $434. The land was located within a mile and a half of his farm. This was part of several thousand acres which was auctioned by the government at Millersburg during the third week of November, 1831. As a result of the auction, there was no more government land within a 50 to 60 mile radius to be purchased. Joss felt, "The land in this area has been taken up very rapidly and therefore we probably hit it quite well with our coming here."[41]

First Impressions of Their New Home

Joss did not choose Holmes County because it looked like home. He reported that the topography of the area bore no similarity to Canton Bern. There were no hills of the same height and no breathtaking views. The woodlands could not be compared to Bern because there were no firs or conifers. The creeks flowed slowly, unlike the cascading waters of Bern. The Captina area was more like Bern.[42]

Joss noted that unlike in Switzerland, farmers in America did not fertilize their fields with manure. Also they did not put their livestock inside the barns during winter. He explained that the barns in America as compared to Swiss barns were so poor that they did not deserve the name. They were long log structures, thirty feet wide, with a wooden threshing floor in the middle. On both sides of the barn floor, on a lower level, were the stables with earthen floors. Most of the harvest was stored in stacks in the fields or flimsy sheds without any kind of roof. Joss stated proudly, "An exception to the poor sheds mentioned above are the barns erected in recent years by the Swiss settlers. These roomy, serviceable structures are popular among the Americans and generally termed "Swiss Barns."[43]

The land was cleared for farming in two ways. In the first way, the young trees were dug out, thrown on piles, and burned. In the case of the large trees, the bark was chopped off three feet above ground, and the trees left to stand and dry out. The second way was to cut down all the trees at once and burn all those not needed to erect fences. The stumps were not removed and the farmer simply farmed around them. Once the land was cleared, it was plowed and usually planted first with corn. The corn was planted in rows two feet apart, and between the rows climbing beans and pumpkins were planted. From the pumpkins a syrup was made which tasted

almost like honey. However, most of the pumpkins were fed to the cattle and hogs. Corn was eaten as muffins or mush, but seldom as bread. It was also fed to the livestock. Hogs which were to be fattened were driven out of the woods in the fall into a pen and then fattened on corn. Within six to eight weeks a skinny pig was turned into a fat hog.[44]

Geese, ducks, chickens and turkeys were seen at every house because Americans ate much fowl.[45] Also at every house one met two or three dogs. Even though they barked fiercely, they seldom bit anyone. It was their job to keep the cattle and hogs away from the house.[46]

Although not as plentiful as formerly, Joss noted that there was still a bountiful supply of deer, rabbits, partridges, mountain cocks and hens (probably referring to turkeys), pheasants, and ducks. His son Fritz had shot two mountain-hens, one of which weighed 14 pounds. The cocks often weigh 20 pounds or more. Bear and wolves were as rare here as in Oberthal, and snakes were seldom seen.[47]

Joss explained that there were three kinds of houses in the area. First were the brick homes made from bricks kilned from clay on the farm where the house was built. Although the bricks were not as well made as in Switzerland, and the walls were much too thin, the houses were handsome and for the most part well built. The second class were frame houses. The outside walls consisted of boards eight inches wide and half an inch thick. they were nailed on with a half an inch overlap. The inside walls were smoothly boarded or plastered. Most were painted red or stone gray with oil paint. He did note that most rested on very weak foundations. The third class were log houses, which he referred to as "block houses." Most of them were two stories high. He noted that they were similar to the "old half-timbered houses or the 'speicher' in Canton Bern. He dispelled the erroneous notion in Switzerland that they had earth floors, were not clean, and that the livestock lived inside with the people. He stated, "On the contrary, the rooms of the Americans in the houses are cleaner than most of the Swiss rural rooms."[48]

Joss noted that roads in Ohio, except for the National Road, were very poor by Swiss standards. They were maintained by a law which required each man to devote two days a year to road duty.[49]

His description of religion in America contrasted sharply with Bern where the Reformed Church was the State Church and ministers were state-supported. He said he saw Christian churches of every denomination he had ever heard of. The preachers were selected by their congregations and poorly paid. They preached several times a day and to several congregations. Anyone who wanted to preach could do so. Nonetheless, there were some excellent ministers. The Lutheran and Reformed Churches obtained their ministers from Germany. Unlike in Europe, the government paid no attention to church matters.[50]

He noted that everywhere Sunday was celebrated in quiet. The inns and taverns were empty. The stores were closed, and no games of any kind were permitted. Husbands and wives would ride several miles to meet with their fellow believers. Although all kinds of Christian beliefs were permitted, atheists and deists were not allowed to speak publicly, and persons who denounced the Holy Scriptures or uttered blasphemous words were subject to punishment.[51]

Clothing differed among religious groups. Joss noted that Swiss Anabaptists (Amish and Mennonites) wore coats with hooks and eyes rather than buttons, the same as in Europe. They also had long beards. Few American Baptists wore beards and their dress was less old-fashioned. Dunkards wore clothes similar to American Baptists. The Swiss Anabaptists had everywhere a reputation of being honest, upright people, conscientious in their dealings with everyone and never pricing their wares too high. For the most part they were well off.[52]

Joss noticed that the interpretation of signs and omens, fear of ghosts, and superstitions existed the same here as at home in Switzerland.[53]

Joss observed that schools were in the hands of the local congregations, thus frequently there were no teachers or schools. Despite this situation, most of the people in his neighborhood could read and write.[54] Joss explained that they had school at their house almost every night, which included not only their own children but some of the their neighbors' children as well. They were learning to read and spell in English. He noted that there was a schoolhouse on his property, and the members of the Reformed Church were looking for someone to conduct a German school.[55]

The fire was kept burning in the living room of every house and never permitted to go out. If the fire did go out, someone was sent to a neighboring house to bring a new fire.[56]

Women and children did not eat with the men. The men would eat first and then the rest of the family.[57]

A bottle of whiskey accompanied the workman to his place of work, whether he be farmhand, carpenter, mason, etc., so that he could partake of it as he saw fit. There was no wine.[58]

Joss said, "What pleases me especially here is this: I see no spirit of fault-finding. Everyone gets along well with one another whether one comes on foot or on horseback, barefooted or in fancy boots, all dressed up or in rags. No one is mocked because he is poor. Nobody is treated better or receives less respect than his neighbor as long as he keeps himself clean. Here the human being is judged according to his inner worth and not according to his wealth. As far as I have observed, the Irish are the least well-liked of all the groups that come here."[59]

Looking back on his decision to come to America, Joss wrote to his brother in January of 1832, "I cannot advise you on coming to the New World or remaining in the old until I have gathered more experience here and have spent at least one summer here. The trip, as several writers have already indicated, is difficult and last year traveling was expensive, though not dangerous, as you will have learned from my letters. My family and I are well satisfied with our surroundings; we haven't regretted our immigration one minute. For each of my four children, should I suddenly depart this life, I have been able to provide a good piece of land, which will take care of their needs. If they are willing to work a bit, their wants will be supplied for them. More, one doesn't need here on earth. At last I have been freed of political responsibilities and the communal troubles which plagued me in Oberthal. My field and the several hundred fruit trees, with which I spend such pleasant hours, do not raise a hue and cry because they have to render their lord too much tribute, as some in the Oberthal always complained of suffering because they had to maintain a man needlessly - in their opinion. And indeed these good people are hardly able to bear all the burdens imposed on them. I wish from the bottom of my heart that they will be able to free themselves as I have been able to."[60]

A Year Later

On October 24, 1832, Nicholas Joss had a year's experience with life on his Walnut Creek farm when he wrote to his brother in Switzerland. He reported that he had seen nothing that contradicted the observations in his earlier letters. He was pleased with the results of his first year of farming in America. He had three horses and a colt, four cows, ten oxen and a calf, 22 sheep, 22 hogs, 14 geese and numerous chickens. The barn was full of the grain and hay harvested from the fields, and he had 15 cords of firewood stacked for the winter. He had added a large shed to the barn and a smokehouse.[61]

He had sold the land which he had purchased from the government. Part of it was sold on credit to two families who came with them and had no money for land. He had purchased another quarter section near Dover which included 30 to 40 acres of cleared land, two log houses and a barn.[62]

He observed that summers were much warmer than in Bern and that the past summer had been dry which had caused the corn, oats, and potato crops to produce less than expected.[63]

Joss reported that the logging up of new houses was a community effort which consumed considerable time. Their family had helped to log up 14 houses during the past summer.[64]

The Reformeds and the Lutherans joined together to build a church in the nearby town of Winesburg where services were to be held in German for both groups. The church would be 44 feet long and 36 feet wide and constructed in the German style. A burial ground would be established adjacent to the church. At the time of Joss's October, 1832, letter construction was expected to be completed in the spring. In the meantime the congregation was meeting at the house of a German by the name of Peter Shaillioll. He had constructed a large stone house which had a room in it large enough for the church meeting. Services were held every two weeks. Ministers in the area took turns preaching and baptizing the children. They expected to have their own preacher when their building was completed in the spring.[65]

Although Joss did not explain to his brother his central role in the organization of the church, the church records show that the first meeting to consider erecting the church was held September 3, 1832, and that Nicholas Joss served as president of the meeting. On September 9 another meeting was held and the congregation was organized under the name of the Evangelical United Zion Congregation. Nicholas Joss was elected president of the congregation. He and several other heads of the Swiss families that came with him are among the 43 signers of the original constitution of the church. As mentioned above, Peter Schallioll offered the use of his house for church meetings until the church building was built. Construction went much slower than Nicholas had hoped. The cornerstone was laid October 11, 1833, and the church building was dedicated May 16, 1841. The building was replaced by a new building in 1871, which is still used by the congregation. Rev. Henry Colloredo served as the first pastor from 1833 to 1836 and he was followed by Rev. Daniel Cranz who served for the next 32 years.[66]

In looking back a year after his settling at Walnut Creek, Joss wrote to his brother, "The invitation to come join us has the same status it had in our last letter. The proverb: Every new beginning is burdensome, is also true here; especially for those who have run out of money. The trip is expensive and very taxing for many. When one finally gets settled down, one misses the household goods left behind and these are not immediately replaceable without spending much money. He who is not accustomed to accepting such hills in anticipation of the open level fields beyond can lose courage in the beginning, especially if his previous occupation - as in my case - had not become so disgusting, and if he is not aware of the misfortune which has befallen most of the communities (in the Canton Bern); or if he does not notice the burdens borne by his neighbors because he himself is not subject to them."[67] Referring to the two poor families who had come with him and to whom he sold land on credit, he explained that they "had a difficult time getting established, but now they are pleased to have their own land and their own houses. This they could never have achieved in Switzerland." As for his own experience, he said, "I can only say on the basis of my convictions that he who does not become homesick for wine (there is wine to be had here but it is too expensive for common folks); he who enjoys a quiet life and can accept the simple household equipment here; he who can and wants to work; he who can exist without gambling, dancing and similar pleasures; he who can accept an outlook under God's heaven different from the one prevailing at home, can get along well here and have an easier life than you have."[68]

Walnut Creek - Settlement by the Amish

Nicholas Joss and his family settled on the Ohio frontier in a Swiss-German community. It was an interesting mix of Pennsylvania-Dutch speaking Amish and Mennonite families from Pennsylvania whose families had been in the country for three or four generations and recent arrivals from Germany and Switzerland. For the purpose of discussion, the Amish and Mennonite families will be called the Walnut Creek settlement, and the recent arrivals will be called the Winesburg settlement. Although both groups spoke German and shared some cultural values, they were entirely different in many important respects.

The Amish and Mennonites left Switzerland because of religious persecution. Following the Protestant reformation, the Swiss established a state-sponsored Protestant church, which came to be known as the Reformed Church. The Anabaptists who believed in separation of church and state and did not believe in infant baptism were persecuted by the government, and were forced to leave the country. Many of them immigrated to the Palitinate, an area of southern Germany along the Rhine. Here they also suffered periodic persecution as well as economic hardship due to dislocations caused by wars between France and the German states. Many immigrated to Pennsylvania before the Revolutionary War, and settlements of Amish and Mennonite families were established in Berks and Lancaster County. During the Revolution many of them suffered persecution because they were pacifists and because of the disruptions caused by that War and the turmoil which followed it. A number of these families moved west and settled in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The large families produced by these people exerted pressure to search for new lands to farm, and in 1809 there began a migration from Somerset County to Holmes County, Ohio. The first to settle in the Walnut Creek area was Jonas Stutzman in 1809. A single man, 21 years of age, he came with his aunt's family to the Sugar Creek area where they settled. He went on to the Walnut Creek valley, five miles further, where he erected a cabin. The following year four young couples arrived to join him in the valley. More families arrived in 1811, and in 1812 over a dozen new families arrived. Most of these were Amish families from Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and most were related through blood or marriage.[69]

In his letters to his brother Nicholas Joss noted that the Swiss Anabaptists wore coats with hooks and eyes, had long beards, and enjoyed reputations for honesty and fair dealing. The Amish were a close-knit community which enforced rigid adherence to their traditional way of life by the threat of the ban. If a member of the Amish community failed to conform, he or she would be cut off from community, family, and friends. They were a people who considered themselves unworldly. In some ways they were a people suspended in time, adhering to their traditional values and way of life established in the 17th century, while history raced by them.

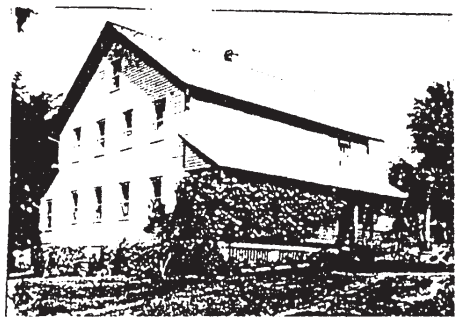
Joss purchased land next to Solomon Hochstetler, who arrived in 1812 from Somerset County. The Hochstetlers were from an old Amish family, which was related by blood and marriage to many of the Amish families of the Walnut Creek settlement, however, Solomon did not become a member of the Amish congregation until late in life due to an incident which occurred when he was a young man. His children did not grow up in the Amish Church. Nicholas Joss's daughter, Anna Elizabeth, married Solomon's son, Elias Hochstetler.

Winesburg - New German Immigrants

The Josses settled near the village of Winesburg, originally spelled Weinsberg, after the town of the same name in Wuertemberg, Germany. The Winesburg settlement began with the arrival of four bachelors from Philadelphia in 1827. These young men were all immigrants born and raised in Germany. They were followed by a relative of two of them, Christian Schmidt, who actually laid out the original 32 lots of Winesburg and established the first store in the village. Unlike the Amish, these people were thoroughly modern, well-educated, Lutherans seeking their fortunes in a new land. They brought with them the religion, science, technology, and world-view of 19th century Germany and Switzerland. Soon after Nicholas Joss's arrival and with his leadership they organized a church which was to serve both the newly-arrived German Lutheran and the newly-arrived Swiss Reformed settlers. Rev. Daniel Cranz, a German-trained Lutheran minister became their pastor. Nicholas oldest son, Fred, married Rev. Cranz's daughter, Louise, and his second son , John, married the storekeeper, Christian Schmidt's, daughter, Catherine. Thus, it can be seen that the family quickly established ties by marriage with both the Walnut Creek and Winesburg settlements.

The Death of Nicholas Joss

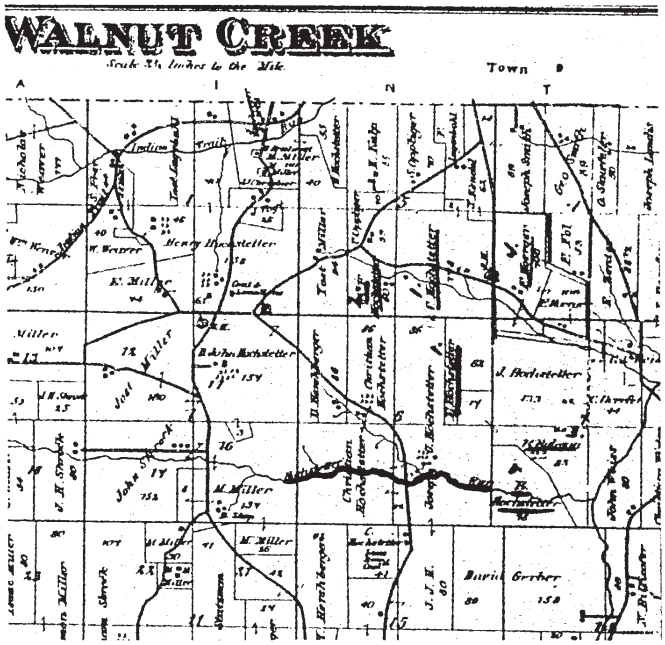
Nicholas died in 1836, at the age of 65, only five years after his arrival at Walnut Creek. They were very busy years and much was accomplished to achieve his American dream. Before his death, he had built a large Swiss-style frame house,[70] which he no doubt envisioned would serve as the home of his wife and children and their families for many years to come.



As indicated by his letters to his brother, Nicholas disposed of the lands which he had purchased from the government before his death. On October 10, 1834, he signed four deeds to complete these transactions. He sold one 172 acre tract to Yost Luginbuhl for $285.[71] Yost was one of the Swiss who had accompanied the Josses on their trip to America. Nicholas reported to his brother, "Jost Lugenbuhl would not sell his land even if someone offered him $400 for it. Jost is so happy he came to America that he cannot adequately express his joy."[72] The other tract was divided into four parcels and two of the parcels were sold to two of the Swiss that came over with him for modest amounts. A 22 acre tract was conveyed to Elizabeth Shindler, referred to by Joss as the "widow Schindler, for $22.[73] A 36 acre tract was conveyed to Peter Steiner for $80.[74] Joss wrote to his brother, "Steiner and his children and the widow Schindler had a difficult time getting started, but now they are pleased to have their own land and their houses. This they never could have achieved in Switzerland."[75] It is clear that Nicholas helped all three of these Swiss families get started in America.

At the time of his death, Nicholas owned the farm which he had purchased from Peter Showalter. Unlike the government land this was an improved farm when he bought it. Showalter contracted with the government to purchase a quarter section on June 17, 1814.[76] Thus, he was among the

early settlers of the Walnut Creek area. The deed from Showalter to Joss included not only 125 acres from the original quarter section which he had purchased from the government, but also 25 acres which he had purchased from Christian Seese, a brother-in-law of Solomon Hochstetler. Seese contracted to buy his quarter section from the government June 23, 1812, among the earliest purchases in the Walnut Creek area.[77] In her Autobiography, Catherine Joss described the Joss farm at the time she visited it in August, 1839, a few years after Nicholas death, as "by far the best in the township."[78]



The farm was subsequently owned for many years by a son-in-law of Elias and Anna Elizabeth Joss Hochstetler who owned a farm nearby.

The family's life-style as well as what father Joss envisioned for his family is revealed by the detailed instructions in his Will:

"One. My three sons, Nicholas Frederick, John and Daniel shall in partnership and at equal shares get in possession of my whole estate, to wit: My land which I have purchased of Peter Showalter and Alexander Vaughn with all the buildings as they are found at my decease, with the grain and food, with the horses and cattle, sheep and hogs, moreover all wagons, sleds, ploughs, harrows, wind mills, harnesses, wood and agricultural tools, the kitchen furniture, beds and bedsteads, all the moveables, smallest and biggest,

with only the exception of what I afterwards shall appropriate to my dear wife, shall be and remain the property of my sons and besides this, I make the same heirs of all my ready and outstanding monies in American and Switzerland, under obligation that they will pay all my existant debts.

Two. My dear wife Barbara of the family Aebersold shall receive after my decease the sum of $1,000, which my sons shall owe her out of my estate falling to them, and she shall use and draw the same in the manner afterwards mentioned. Before all, she shall be at liberty, with her property just mentioned, to continue housekeeping together with my sons, if they be willing. In this case, she draws her wants out of the common purse. As soon though as she wants to keep house for herself, she shall have the right in any one of the buildings which have become the property of my sons to choose for her quiet habitation, a room at her pleasure. Besides she shall be allowed the necessary room in the kitchen, cellar, and the upper rooms. The sons shall deliver her with the necessary firewood ready to the house. Of all the plants of the garden and eatables of the ground she shall be entitled to what is necessary for her subsistence and of all the stone and kernel fruit one fifth shall be hers. Besides the sons shall fetch her in every year one fat hog not weighing under 200 pounds, 15 bushels of weat, two bushels of corn, one hundred pounds of unsalted butter. In the spring and summer season every day two quarts; the fall and winter only one quart of milk fresh from the cows. In the spring and summer months every week one dozen and in the fall and winter weekly half a dozen eggs. Moreover, it shall be the duty of my sons to sow out for their mother every year a half bushel of hemp or flax seed. Besides, these articles, they shall make over in cash every year five and twenty dollars. Of household furniture for her use for lifetime or as long as she remains a widow, there shall belong to her a bed of her own choice with beddings and bedstead, the clock, a pan, a kitchen pot, a tin kettle, the tea service she likes and the books she wishes. All this she shall have to enjoy for life or as long as she remanins in wodowhood. Likewise she is entitled to of the thousand dollars which is assigned to her as much as she needs. But if sooner or later she should wish to live another place, she shall be entitled to do so. But then all the enumerated involvements shall be extinct and my sons then have to pay the annual interest of the one thousand dollars or to defray the principal as she needs. But if the case happens that she marries again, she has to take along with her six hundred dollars. If she should have children yet which would be alive at her death, they shall keep this six hundred dollars as the inheritance of their mother. In case this matrimony should prove childless or if there should not be any of the children alive at her decease, this six

hundred dollars shall fall back to our four children at equal shares in the same way as the four hundred dollars shall do at her marriage.

Three. My daughter Ann Elizabeth, who is married to Elias Hochstetler, shall receive of my sons out of the estate assigned to them in the case of my decease, as the portion of the inheritance falling to her the sum of $550 payable with interest as follows: in five succeeding yearly terms. in the first four terms one hundred and the fifth and last, one hundred fifty dollars. The expiration of the first terms shall be in the year 1839, while of these five hundred and fifty dollars from the date of my decease the annual interest of six percent shall be duly paid up till their partial discharge. Such is my paternal ordinance which shall be lived by after my death if I should not repeal or alter it before yet. November 21, 1836. Nicholas Joss

The Will was witnessed by Rev. Daniel Cranz, his pastor, and by Dr. Augustus F. Scheurer, his physician, who was one of the four bachelors who first settled in Winesburg.

Barbara Joss died in 1864.

Nicholas Frederick Joss

Nicholas and Barbara's oldest son, Nicholas Frederick Joss, referred to as "Fritz" in his father's letters home and "Fred" in his sister-in-law's autobiography, married Rev. Cranz's oldest daughter Louise in 1836. He

settled on his own farm which was then all woods, cleared and improved it, and lived in a log cabin. In the summer he worked the farm, and in the winter he taught school.[79] After selling his farm, he clerked in a store in Navarre on the canal for awhile to learn the business. In 1846 Fred moved to Winesburg, where he became a prominent merchant and notary public and was called the "King of Winesburg."[80] In 1846 he opened a store in Winesburg with William Schalliol, as Joss and Schalliol. He then bought out his partner and continued in business until 1873 when he sold his business to his son Charles and son-in-law, August Frederick.[81]

Though not a lawyer, many came to him for advice and counsel, recognizing his superior knowledge in legal matters. As notary public, he wrote many of the deeds, wills, mortgages and other legal papers used by those in and around Winesburg.[82]

In reporting his death on August 2, 1886, the Holmes County Farmer referred to him as "our esteemed democratic friend." He was described as "one of the most useful men of Holmes County" and "a man of more than ordinary intelligence and education, having assisted the community in which he resided in many laudable enterprises."[83] On August 19 the Farmer published a resolution signed by 29 friends and relatives then residing in Spring Grove and Fairview, Kansas, in which it was stated, "his memory shall ever be kept green by us for his warm interest shown in the welfare of our community by his wise counsel, prudent suggestions, and kind assistance."[84]

Anna Elizabeth Joss Hochstetler

On May 7, 1834, Nicholas and Barbara's daughter married Elias, son of their neighbors, Solomon and Barbara Hochstetler.[85] Elias and Anna Elizabeth lived on a farm near the Joss farm. Elias was a farmer, blacksmith, and auctioneer. He also taught in the neighborhood school. He had come to Ohio with his parents in August, 1812, as a lad of four, when the Walnut Creek area was still a wilderness.[86] Like his brother-in-law Fred, he was recognized as a leader of the community, serving as township clerk for 20 years, a justice of the peace, fund commissioner and county commissioner.[87] He and his wife were charter members of the Trail Swiss Reformed Church which was established near their farm in 1844.[88] They were survived by nine children.

John Joss

Nicholas' daughter-in-law Catherine Joss wrote an autobiography in which she described her life with Catherine and Barbara's third child, John. Since she lived in the Joss home for awhile after her marriage, she provides some fascinating insights into the family and the community they lived in. Catherine went to live at the Joss home following her marriage to John Joss in August, 1839. By that time Nicholas had passed away. She said, "Next day (after the wedding) we rode to the farm that was the Joss home, where they all lived together. The oldest brother had been there several years. They had a very large house, built by father Joss in the Swiss style, and must have expected to keep all the family together while they lived."[89] She went on to say, "The oldest and youngest brothers did not intend to farm always, and my husband therefore took the farm that was already cultivated when bought, and with the improvements father Joss had made, was by far the best farm in the township; it was to remain the home of mother Joss as long as she lived, with certain privileges. We could only sell subject to them."[90]

Farming did not suit John Joss for long. After their first child was born, they moved to Winesburg, and with her father's assistance opened a grocery, which had a room in the back where the men gathered in the evening to drink and socialize. The men had organized a band, which included both John and his brother Daniel, and met at the house for practice and to dance.[91]

After their second child, Catherine could not stand it any longer and thought they could escape the noise and drunkenness by moving back to the farm. Since the cellar was full of drink, the men continued to come to the farm in the evenings and Sundays where they would sit around the table smoke their pipes and drink. The band now met at their house on the farm.[92]

The home was also the headquarters of the democrat club. They had an ox roast for the neighborhood when William Henry Harrison was elected president. The club had a flag with a coonskin and cider barrel on it, and a live raccoon on a chain which they took to political rallies.[93]

John did not like the drudgery of farm work. He purchased the first threshing machine in the neighborhood and went around to the other farms with it with horses and men and threshed for hire. However, when questioned whether he made enough to cover the expense, he said "because he did not work till he split blood and teach school all winter like his brother Fred, she thought he did nothing, but he made more in some trade or speculation than Fred did all winter."[94]

After they had been on the farm for a year, John decided to sell out and move to Cleveland. They then moved to Toledo which was a booming town then, and then on to Chicago, and then to Milwaukee which was a gateway to the frontier. They returned to Aurora, Illinois. Catherine first sent her three sons back to her parents, and then returned with her daughters to her parents to avoid starvation. John died at age 37. John was found by a young boy lying face up on the prairie with 38 cents in his pocket and a certificate from Holmes County certifying that he had served as regimental bugler for seven years in the local militia.[95] In the case of John, the promise of the new world, which his father had believed in, drowned in alcohol.

Lest we think this was the end of the American dream for this line of the family, we learn from the Authentic History of Winesburg, that John and Catherine's son John C. Joss at the age of 18 enlisted in the union army and became regimental bugler. He was in battles in Tennessee and North Carolina. As a jeweler and owner of a music store, he was one of the prominent business men in New Philadelphia.[96] He became a widely acclaimed symbol of patriotism in his later years. He was a picturesque and inspiring figure at Civil War reunions all over the country. He sounded his bugle from the top of the Eiffel Tower, from the top of the Washington

Monument, on Bunker Hill Monument, at Plymouth Rock, and at every major civil war battlefield.[97]

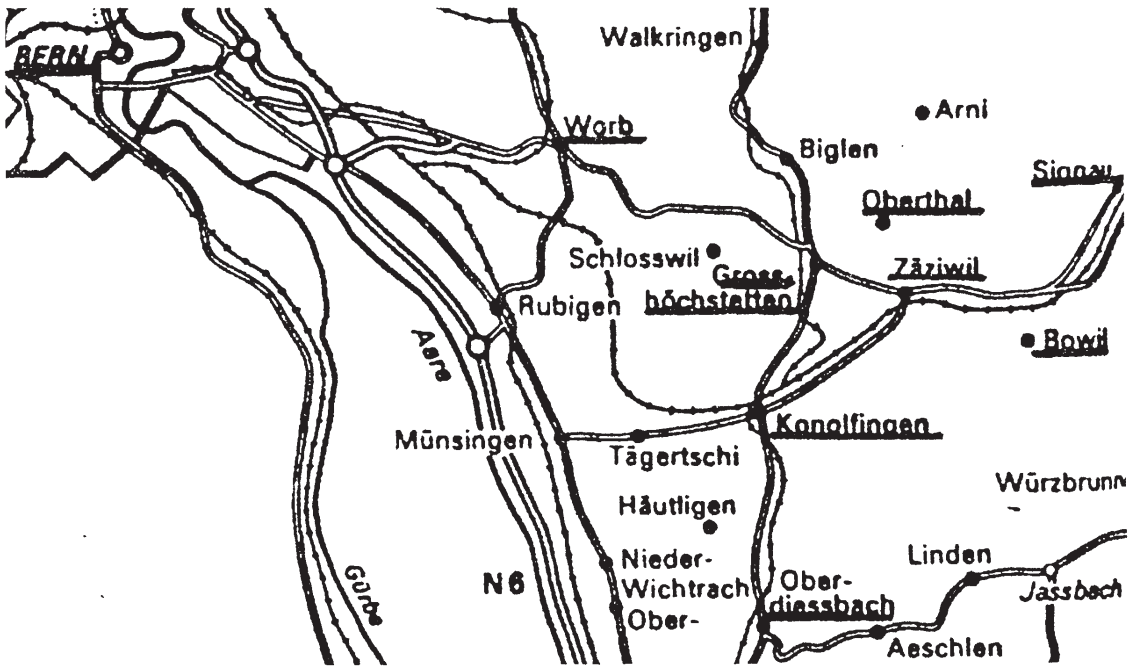
Daniel Joss

Nicholas and Barbara's youngest child, Daniel, studied medicine under Dr. Carl Peter of Winesburg, and subsequently moved to Waverly, Pike County, Ohio, where he practiced medicine. He married Nancy Jane Mitchell in Waverly.[98] Dr. Peter was a German-trained physician who was the Winesburg community's physician for forty years.[99]

Peter Joss

The brother to whom Nicholas sent his letters about his trip to America was Peter Joss who came to America with his family in 1834. He diedAugust 19, 1835, soon after his arrival.[100]

Joss Family Heritage in Switzerland



Map of Area of Canton Bern, Switzerland, Where Joss Family Lived

On July 1, 1973, about 350 Joss descendants met at the Grosshochstettin Reformed Church about 17 miles east of Bern, Switzerland, to attend the Joss International Reunion. Descendants were there from Switzerland, France, England, Austria, Canada, and America. The Joss name was pronounced Yohss with a long O.[101]

The home in which Nicholas Joss was born is known as "Schurach" and was located on the road from Zaziwill to Gross Hochstettin. It was a large frame house with barn and haylot attached. In 1973 it was still in use.[102]

The Swiss genealogist, Franz Walter Kummer, presented a report to the 1973 reunion on the Joss family. He reported that the name Joss can be traced to the Saint Jodokus who died in 669 A.D. in France. He was highly venerated and pilgrims from all over Europe visted his grave. In Southern Germany and Switzerland many places were consecrated to him. In Germany the name took the form of Yost and in Switzerland Joss was more common. The family of which Nicholas was a member traces its line to Hans Joss who in 1319 was admitted as a citizen of Bern. A younger son Rudolph had a son Ulrich whose descendants settled in Wortenwill near Worb.[103] Niklaus's grandfather Peter Joss was christened in April 25, 1680 in Worb. He moved to Grosshochstettin where Nicholas's father Peter and Nicholas were born.[104]

The Peter Joss Family Bible, printed in 1668, contained the history of the family. In it are recorded Peter Joss's marraige on May 15, 1766, and the birth of his children, as well as the departure date of Nicholas for America.[105]

The Joss Family Heritage in Holmes County

Although presently not used, the house built by Nicholas Joss is still standing, as well as a barn adjacent to it. The Evangelical Zion Lutheran Church in Winesburg which he was instrumental in establishing is in use, although the present building was completed in 1871. In front of the church is a boulder with a bronze memorial tablet commemorating the first settlers and pioneers of Winesburg which includes the name of Nicholas F. Joss. The graves of Nicholas and Barbara Joss are located in the cemetery adjacent to the church. The Swiss Reformed Church which Elias Hochstetler and Anna Elizabeth Joss, his wife, helped found is still standing, but the building is now used by a different denomination. They are buried in the cemetery beside that church.

The American Dream

Disillusioned by the corruption in their native land and lured by the promise of the "New World", Nicholas and Barbara Joss abandoned their Swiss homeland to pursue the American dream. That dream is being lived out and renewed by thousands of descendants who can always look to the vision, courage, and determination of their immigrant ancestors for inspiration.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The Swiss spelling of his name was Niklaus, however, in American records he was referred to as Nicholas. The date of departure is found in the Peter Joss Bible.
[2] Nicholas first letter refers to Zaziwil. In the Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, it is stated he left from Grosshockstettin. The Joss home was located on the road between Zaziwil and Grosshocstettin about 17 miles east of the City of Bern which is located in the Canton of Bern, Switzerland.
[3] Rev. Harvey Hochstetler, Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, p. 278, fn. 2207.
[4] The observations of Nicholas Joss about the trip were recorded in letters which he sent to his brother who remained in Switzerland. The letters were published in German by C.A. Jenni, bookdealer in Bern in 1833 under the title The Niklaus Joss Letters. The letters were translated by Professor C. Richard Beam of the Millersburgh University of Pennsylvania and published in 1985 by the Nineteenth Quadrennial Winesburg Reunion.
[5] Nicholas was born March 18, 1772, in Worb, Canton Bern, Switzerland, the son of Peter and Verena (Steiner) Joss.
[6] Barbara (Aebersold) Joss was born July 27, 1789, in Ober-Diesbach, Canton Bern, Switzerland.
[7] Anna Elizabeth Joss was born May 17, 1834, in Oberthal, near Hoechstettin, Canton Bern, Switzerland. Rev. Harvey Hochstetler, Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, p. 278.
[8] Rev. Harvey Hochstetler, Descendants of Jacob Hochstettler, p. 278, fn. 2207.
[9] Billigmeier and Picard, The Old Land and The New, The Journals of Two Swiss Families in America in the 1820s, pp. 6,7.
[10] The Joss Letters, pp. 22, 23. Captina Creek is located in Belmont County.
[11] The Niklaus Joss Letters, p. 8
[12] The Niklaus Joss Letters, p. 9
[13] The Niklaus Joss Letters, p. 7
[14] The Niklaus Joss Letters, pp. 12, 13.
[15] Id at 15.
[16] Id at 15.
[17] Id at 14, 15.
[18] Id at 13, 14.
[19] Id at 16

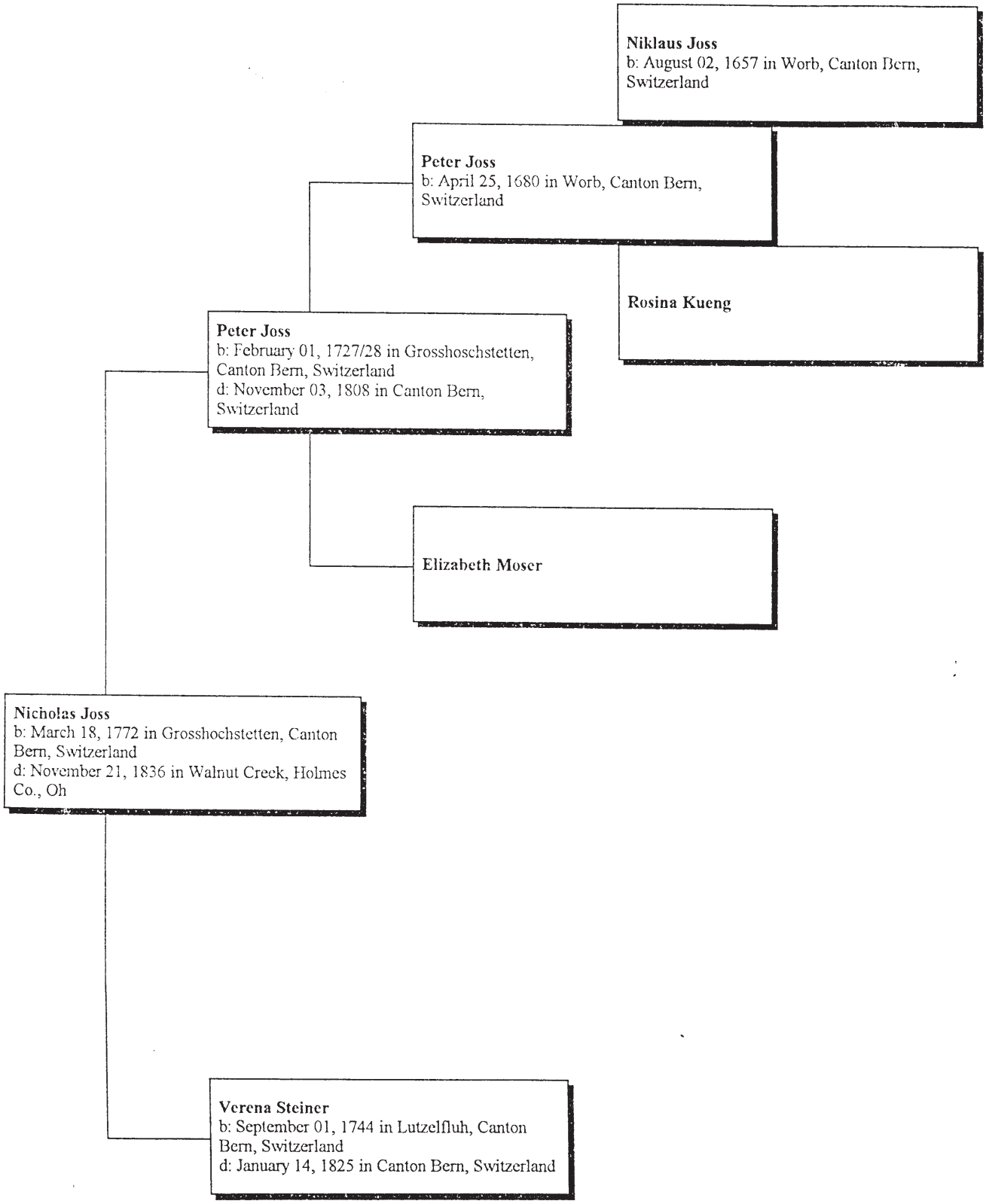
[20] Id at 17.
[21] Id at 17, 18,19,
[22] Id at 20, 21.
[23] Swiss Emigrants Seek Home in America, edited by Leo Titus, Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 168.
[24] The Niklaus Joss Letters, pp. 20, 21.
[25] Id at 21, 22.
[26] Id at 21.
[27] Id at 22.
[28] Swiss Emigrants Seek Home in America, edited by Leo Titus, Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 170, 171.
[29] The Niklaus Joss Letters, p. 22.
[30] Swiss Emigrants Seek Home in America, edited by Leo Titus, Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 172.
[31] Id at 172.
[32] Id at 173.
[33] Id at 174.
[34] The Niklaus Joss Letters, p. 30.
[35] Id at 23.
[36] Id at 25.
[37] Id at 25.
[38] Id at 31.
[39] Id at 25.
[40] Id at 25, 26.
[41] Id at 27.
[42] Id at 34.
[43] Id at 28, 29.
[44] Id at 31, 32.
[45] Id at 34.
[46] Id at 34.
[47] Id at 34.
[48] Id at 28.
[49] Id at 29.
[50] Id at 35, 36.
[51] Id at 36; the other Swiss diarist noted that, "Sunday is strictly observed throughout the United States. No games and no business, much less trades, can be practiced." Swiss Emigrants Seek Home in America, edited by Leo Titus, Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 183.
[52] The Joss Letters, p. 39.
[53] Id at 36.
[54] Id at 35, 36.
[55] Id at 41.
[56] Id at 36.
[57] Id at 37.
[58] Id at 37.

[59] Id at 39.
[60] Id at 40.
[61] Id at 46, 47.
[62] Id at 48.
[63] Id at 47.
[64] Id at 47, 48.
[65] Id at 46, 49, 50.
[66] Rev. Arthur Henry Smith, An Authentic History of Winesburg, pp. 31-33.
[67] The Joss Letters, p. 48.
[68] Id at 49.
[69] Stanley A. Kaufman and Leroy Beachy, Amish in Eastern Ohio, German Culture Museum, Walnut Creek, Ohio, 1990, pp.10-17.
[70] Autobiography of Catherine Joss, Part I - Early Life in Winesburg, Ohio, reprinted by Winesburg Historical Society, 1985, p. 88. She stated, "They had a very large house, built by father Joss in the Swiss style, and must have expected to keep all the family together while they lived."

[71] Deed Book 3, p. 83, Holmes County Recorder. The buyer's name is spelled Luckenbill in the deed.
[72] The Joss Letters, p. 49.
[73] Deed Book 4, p. 626, Holmes County Recorder. The grantees in the deed were Elizabeth Shindler, Peter Stoner and Frederick Isley.
[74] Deed Book 4, p. 625. In the deed the buyer's name is spelled "Stoner."
[75] The Joss Letters, p. 49.
[76] Tract Book and Entries, Congress Lands, 22 Ranges, and United States Military Lands, Vol. 1, p. 524, Ohio Historical Society. The patent from the government which was not issued until the land was completely paid for was dated June 20, 1818. Deed Book 2, p. 185, Holmes County Recorder.
[77] Id. The patent to Seese was dated March 12, 1817. Deed Book 2, p. 185, Holmes County Recorder.
[78] Autobiography of Catherine Joss, p. 91.
[79] Holmes County Farmer, Aug 12, 1886.
[80] Rev. Arthur Henry Smith, An Authentic History of Winesburg, reprinted by the Winesburg Historical Society, 1994, author's supplement, p. 11.
[81] Id at 29.
[82] Id at 28.
[83] Holmes County Farmer, August 5, 1886.
[84] The Holmes County Farmer, August 19, 1886.
[85] Holmes County Marriage Record Vol. 1, p. 189.
[86] Holmes County Farmer, Oct 20, 1888.
[87] Harvey Hochstetler, Descendants of Jacob Hochstetler, p. 279
[88] Authentic History of Winesburg, p. 36, 37.
[89] Autobiography of Catherine Joss, Part I - Early Life in Winesburg, Ohio, reprinted by Winesburg Historical Society, 1985, p. 88.
[90] Id at 91.

[91] Id at 94, 97.
[92] Id at 97, 100.
[93] Id at 100.
[94] Id at 100.
[95] Autobiography of Catherine Joss, Cleveland, Ohio, 1891, p. 318.
[96] Portrait and Biographical Record of Tuscarawas County, Ohio, C. O. Owens & Co., 1895, pp. 217-219.
[97] Rev. Arthur Henry Smith, An Authentic History of Winesburg, reprinted by the Winesburg Historical Society, 1994, p. 29; Holmes County Farmer, June 29, 1922; Historical Atlas of Tuscarawas County, p. 1.24.
[98] Holmes County Farmer, Aug. 12, 1886.
[99] Authentic History of Winesburg, p. 28.
[100] Peter Joss Bible; Historical Atlas of Tuscarawas County, p. 1.24.
[101] Account of Betty Dean a descendant of Niklaus Joss's brother Peter forwarded to author by James Blaser.
[102] Letter from James Blaser to author dated December, 1997, with pictures of house.
[103] Summary of the Synopses Report on the Joss Family by Franz Walter Kummer provided to author by James Blaser.
[104] Letter from James Blaser to Author dated December, 1997, based on annotated Swiss Records furnish by Paul Hochstetler to Nancy Gilmore.
[105] Peter Joss Bible

Ancestors of Nicholas Joss



Nicholas Joss b: March 18, 1772 in Grosshochstetten, Canton Bern, Switzerland d: November 21, 1836 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
.+Barbara Aebersold b: July 27, 1789 in Ober-Diesbach, Canton Bern, Switzerland d: March 02, 1864 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... 2 Nicholas Frederick Joss b: May 22, 1813 in Canton Bern, Switzerland d: August 02, 1886 in Winesburg, Ohio
..... +Louisa Cranz b: in Germany d: in Holmes County, Ohio
..... 3 Caroline F. E. Joss b: March 24, 1839
..... +Simon Gerber
..... 3 Wilhelm Joss b: June 11, 1840 in Holmes County, Ohio d: 1859
..... 3 Emilie Pauline Joss b: July 22, 1842
..... +August Frederick
..... 3 Adolphina Wilhelmina Joss b: April 08, 1844
..... 3 Eleanora Maria Margaretha Joss b: March 18, 1854
..... 3 Maria Louisa Joss b: March 21, 1856
..... +Frederick Reichenbach, Jr.
..... 3 Charles Joss b: 1849 in Winesburg, Ohio d: 1909 in Barbertown, Ohio
..... +Frances Kilmer
..... 4 Erma Leonora Joss b: 1880
..... 4 Eldon Frederick Joss b: 1882
..... 4 Omar Joss b: 1884
..... +Ruth Abrams
..... 5 Ellie Joss
..... 5 Robert Joss
..... 3 Sophia Wilhelmina Joss b: 1851 d: 1881
..... +John Frederick Blaser b: 1845 d: 1896
..... 4 Lenora Marie Blaser b: August 03, 1874
..... +Fred Cleophas
..... 4 Charles Ferdinand Blaser b: 1875 d: 1951
..... +Lena Gruenisen
..... 5 Maria Ethel Blaser b: December 19, 1898
..... +Herbert Krapp
..... 5 Carl Leander Blaser b: February 01, 1900
..... 5 Ralph Arthur Blaser b: March 10, 1904
..... 4 Arthur Blaser b: October 02, 1876
..... +Esther Hemphill
..... 5 Arthur Blaser, Jr.
..... 5 Margaret Blaser
..... +Marion Black
..... 4 William Edward Blaser b: 1877 d: 1879
..... 4 Emelie Blaser b: March 23, 1879
..... +Gordon Stair
..... 4 William Simon Blaser b: October 25, 1880
..... +Elektra Karch
..... 5 Mary Elizabeth Blaser b: July 09, 1912
..... 5 Virginia Blaser b: October 10, 1916
..... 2 Anna Elizabeth Joss b: October 27, 1815 in Oberthal, Canton Bern, Switzerland d: April 03, 1884 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... +Elias Hochstetler b: February 17, 1808 in Elklick, Somerset Co., Pa. d: September 30, 1888 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... 3 Josephine Theresia Hochstetler b: April 18, 1839 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: December 11, 1905 in Nevada, Wyandot Co., Ohio
..... +Frederick Kuenzli b: May 23, 1834 in Bern, Switzerland d: December 23, 1891 in Eden Twp., Wyandot Co., Oh
..... 4 Grace Violet Kuenzli b: March 27, 1878 in Eden Township, Wyandot Co., Ohio d: May 11, 1930 in Upper Sandusky, Ohio
..... +William Guy Milligan b: April 13, 1873 in Sycamore Twp., Wyandot County, Oh d: November 13, 1936 in Upper Sandusky, Ohio
..... 5 James Frederick Milligan b: November 14, 1906 in Upper Sandusky, Ohio d: May 24, 1997 in Westerville, Ohio
..... +Lucy Virginia Stone b: August 10, 1910 in Columbus, Ohio d: February 09, 1972 in Westerville, Ohio
..... 6 Frederick J. Milligan b: August 23, 1942 in Columbus, Ohio
..... +Carol Ann Moreland b: July 27, 1944 in Carrollton, Ohio
..... 7 Jennifer Lee Milligan b: February 11, 1968 in Columbus, Ohio
..... +Daniel Joseph Zolli b: November 29, 1966 in Boston, Massachusets
..... 7 Corey Lisle Milligan b: March 03, 1970 in Columbus, Ohio
..... +Jessica Kidder
..... 7 Michael Moreland Milligan b: February 23, 1973 in Columbus, Ohio
..... 6 [1] David Timothy Milligan b: December 13, 1943 in Columbus, Ohio
..... +Suzanne Head
..... *2nd Wife of [1] David Timothy Milligan:
..... +Maxine Throckmorton b: 1942 in Franklin County, Ohio
..... 7 Molly Milligan b: February 13, 1984
..... 6 John Frederick Milligan b: August 26, 1935 in Columbus, Ohio d: December 23, 1940 in Columbus, Ohio
..... 5 John W. Milligan b: October 25, 1901 in Upper Sandusky d: April 05, 1970 in Upper Sandusky
..... +Maxine Pfisterer b: 1899 d: February 23, 1970 in Upper Sandusky
..... 6 James Milligan b: in Upper Sandusky, Ohio
..... +Astrida b: in Latvia
..... 7 John David Millign
..... +Debbie
..... 7 Julie Kay Milligan
..... +John Osaka
..... 8 Emily Eve Osaka b: September 05, 1997

..... 6 Peter Milligan b: 1943 in Upper Sandusky d: August 18, 1996 in Upper Sandusky
..... +Ruth Ann
..... 7 Mark Milligan
..... 7 Michael Milligan
..... 5 Evelyn Rose Milligan b: 1903 d: September 18, 1974 in Bucyrus, Ohio
..... +Orland C. Maskey, Jr. b: 1902 d: October 02, 1972 in Bucyrus, Ohio
..... 6 Jane Maskey
..... +Delbert Williams d: September 17, 1995 in Bucyrus, Oh
..... 7 Jenny Williams b: 1970
..... 7 Mark Williams b: 1965
..... 7 Tammy Williams
..... +Nick Horning
..... 7 Debbie Williams
..... +William Stump
..... 7 Mattew Williams b: 1971
..... 7 Michael Williams
..... +Linda Kay Borden
..... 5 Mary Josephine Milligan b: 1907 in Eden Twp., Wyandot Co., Oh d: November 12, 1993 in Miami, Fl
..... +Gilbert Fay d: 1993 in Miami, Fl
..... 5 Charles S. Milligan b: October 14, 1914 in Wyandot County, Ohio
..... +June Keinath
..... 6 George Milligan b: in Coshocton, Ohio
..... +P. J.
..... 7 Lynn Milligan
..... 7 Susie Milligan
..... 7 Matt Milligan
..... 6 Mary Milligan b: in Coshocton, Ohio
..... +Douglas Taylor
..... 7 Darrin Taylor
..... 6 Mark Milligan b: in Coshocton, Ohio
..... +Mary Milligan
..... 7 Luke Milligan
..... 7 Drew Milligan
..... 5 Dorotha Jane Milligan b: November 10, 1916 in Eden Twp., Wyandot Co., Oh d: December 04, 1993 in Athens, Ga
..... +William "Red" Rader b: in Ohio d: October 13, 1993 in Athens, Ga
..... 6 Jo Ann Rader
..... +James O. Bailey d: 1978 in Columbus, Ohio
..... 7 Suzanne Bailey
..... 7 Elizabeth Bailey
..... 7 William R. Bailey
..... 6 [2] Nancy Kay Rader b: December 21, 1945 in Columbus, Ohio
..... +Maynard Charles Bliss
..... 7 Bradley Alan Blalock b: June 18, 1970 in Miami, FL
..... +Angela Carter b: November 21, 1975
..... 8 Lawton Alan Blalock b: February 24, 1997
..... *2nd Husband of [2] Nancy Kay Rader:
..... +David Michael Blalock b: October 19, 1949
..... 7 William David Blalock b: February 05, 1976
..... 7 Brad Blalock
..... 7 Michael Blalock
..... *3rd Husband of [2] Nancy Kay Rader:
..... +Kenneth Steven Altschul b: June 19, 1948 in Decatur, Ga
..... 6 [3] Jill Rader, aka Rader Hays
..... +? Hays
..... 7 Heather Hays
..... *2nd Husband of [3] Jill Rader, aka Rader Hays:
..... +Cliff Caudill
..... 4 Sophia Kuenzli b: 1861 in Holmes Co., Oh. d: 1919 in Wyandot Co. Oh
..... +Edward G. Blaser b: 1856 d: 1923
..... 5 Esther Blaser
..... +Herbert DeVoe
..... 5 Frederick W. Blaser b: 1892 in Nevada, Ohio d: 1929 in Upper Sansuky, Oh
..... +Mary M. Kotterman b: 1901 in Wyandot Co., Ohio d: September 03, 1996 in Wyandot Co., Oh
..... 6 James F. Blaser b: 1926 in Upper Sansuky, Oh
..... 6 Shirley E. Blaser b: March 31, 1928 in Upper Sandusky, Oh
..... +John Thomas Egbert b: July 29, 1926
..... 7 [4] Jan Elaine Egbert b: October 10, 1950
..... +Robert McConaughy b: September 05, 1948
..... 8 Todd Blaser McConaughy b: February 17, 1978
..... 8 Alexis Mary McConaughy b: September 15, 1982
..... *2nd Husband of [4] Jan Elaine Egbert:
..... +Ean Howard Sullivan b: September 04, 1948
..... 7 John Thomas Egbert b: November 18, 1953
..... +Beverly Ann Smith b: January 01, 1954

..... 8 Laura Elizabeth Egbert b: March 05, 1982
..... 8 Julie Anne Egbert b: June 12, 1985
..... 8 Mary Beth Egbert b: September 21, 1986
..... 7 Ruth Ann Egbert b: September 13, 1960
..... +Timothy Sean Miles b: March 04, 1961
..... 8 Frederick William Miles b: May 06, 1992
..... 4 Edward S. Kuenzli b: 1863 d: 1940
..... +Victoria Neats b: 1868 d: 1940
..... 4 Henry L. Kuenzli b: 1865 d: 1930
..... +Viola Sigler b: 1870 d: 1957
..... 4 [5] Charles Kuenzli b: 1869 d: 1914
..... +Ellen Kaufman
..... *2nd Wife of [5] Charles Kuenzli:
..... +Esther Songer
..... 4 John Kuenzli b: 1871
..... 4 William T. Kuenzli b: 1874 d: 1951
..... +Myrtle Cross b: 1879 d: 1959
..... 5 Helen Kuenzli
..... +Foster Scott
..... 5 Gilbert Kuenzli
..... +Everda Hartzell
..... 5 Harold Kenzli b: 1901 d: 1954
..... +Clarice Brown
..... 5 Bernice Kunezli
..... +Richard Frasch
..... 5 Josephine Kuenzli
..... +Gladden Warren
..... 5 Clara Kuenzli
..... +Edward Rannow
..... 4 Elmer Kuenzli b: 1880 d: 1956
..... +Grace Bowlby
..... 3 Mary Elizabeth Hochstetler b: August 15, 1834 in Holmes Co., Oh.
..... +George Frederick Steigleder b: July 30, 1829 in Wurttemberg, Germany d: December 05, 1909
..... 3 Julia A. Hochstetler b: July 06, 1836 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: March 04, 1911 in Barrs Mills, Oh.
..... +Charles Frederick Hoerger b: November 09, 1831 in Wurtemberg, Germany d: March 02, 1911 in Barrs Mills, Oh.
..... 4 William Henry Hoerger b: December 06, 1857 d: April 06, 1862
..... 4 Emily Matilda Hoerger b: November 06, 1858
..... 4 Louis Robert Hoerger b: February 06, 1860 d: March 14, 1862 in Walnut Creek Twp. Holmes Co., Ohio
..... 4 Louise Henrietta Hoerger b: February 06, 1863
..... 4 Julia Hoerger b: September 18, 1864
..... 4 Rosina Ellen Hoerger b: October 23, 1865
..... 4 Charles Franklin Hoerger b: September 14, 1867
..... 4 Adolph Elias Hoerger b: January 12, 1871
..... 4 Sophia Otilla Hoerger b: June 25, 1872
..... 4 Mary Lenora Hoerger b: October 02, 1875
..... 3 William Franklin Hochstetler b: April 09, 1841 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: October 30, 1912 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... +Louisa Blaser b: May 09, 1848 in Holmes Co., Oh. d: January 05, 1922 in Millersburg, Holmes Co. Oh
..... 4 Frederick Hochstetler
..... +Irene Selzer
..... 5 Paul V. Hostetler b: February 17, 1906 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: February 17, 1992 in Hamden, Ct.
..... +Violet Carithers
..... 6 Judith H. Hostetler
..... +? Newman
..... 6 Paul Blair Hostetler
..... 5 Merle Hostetler d: March 27, 1991
..... 5 Betty Hostetler
..... +Elmer Zarney
..... 3 Henrietta Hochstetler b: May 13, 1843 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: March 21, 1862 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... 3 Sophia Barbara Hochstetler b: January 11, 1846 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: in Kansas
..... +Henry Isley b: September 01, 1841 d: March 24, 1904
..... 3 [6] Jerome James Hochstetler b: May 23, 1848 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: in Kress, Texas
..... +Emily Blaser d: July 18, 1880 in Brown Co., Kansas
..... *2nd Wife of [6] Jerome James Hochstetler:
..... +Julia Geiger b: May 01, 1853 in Navarre, Oh
..... 3 Martha Matilda Martha b: June 27, 1850 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh d: March 28, 1862 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... 3 Heinrich Jackson Hochstetler b: June 27, 1853 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... +Mary B. Reinhard b: March 05, 1859 in Winesburg, Holmes Co., Ohio
..... 3 Emily Caroline Hochstetler b: October 15, 1855
..... 3 Louisa Hochstetler b: December 18, 1857 in Walnut Creek, Holmes Co., Oh
..... +William M. Reinhart b: December 06, 1856 in Cleveland, Oh
..... 3 Hochstetler
..... 2 John Joss b: 1818 in Bern, Switzerland d: July 1855 in Illinois
..... +Catherine Schmidt b: October 07, 1820 in Philadelphia, Pa. d: March 10, 1907
..... 3 John C. Joss b: July 12, 1846 in Toledo, Ohio d: June 23, 1922 in New Philadelphia, Oh

..... +Emma M. Smith
..... 4 John E. Joss
..... 4 Mary C Joss
..... 4 Carrie P. Joss
..... 4 George S. Joss
..... 3 George Nicklaus Joss b: July 22, 1840 d: 1920
..... +Caroline Kuenzli b: February 14, 1843 in Holmes County, Ohio d: 1884
..... 4 Henry E. Joss b: 1864 d: 1937
..... +Sarah A. Griffith b: 1863
..... 5 Thomas Joss b: 1893
..... 5 Elizabeth M. Joss b: 1895
..... +Clifford Phillips Jr.
..... 6 David H. Phillips b: 1917
..... +Alice Warner
..... 6 Clifford H. Phillips b: 1920
..... 4 Albert B. Joss b: 1867 d: 1938
..... +Elizabeth Wasesp b: 1873 d: 1939
..... 5 Catherine C. Joss b: 1897
..... +C. Ray Wyatt b: 1894 d: 1947
..... 6 Sarah Jane Wyatt b: 1920
..... +Ralph E. McDonnald b: 1920
..... 7 John S. McDonnald b: 1947
..... 7 Scott W. McDonnald b: 1950
..... 4 William L. Joss b: 1871 d: 1944
..... +Dora V. Dixon b: 1873 d: 1915
..... 5 Nellie D. Joss b: 1891
..... +Charles E. Evans b: 1891 d: 1947
..... 6 Dora W. Evans b: 1912
..... +Haskle H. Brewer b: 1907
..... 7 Barbara J. Brewer b: 1932
..... 7 Shirley Brewer b: 1934
..... 5 Addie Joss b: 1893
..... 3 Anna Elisa Joss b: October 18, 1841 d: 1845
..... 3 Paulina Emilia Joss b: September 09, 1849
..... +Charles Scheufler
..... 4 Ida Scheufler b: November 27, 1879
..... 3 Louisa Barbara Joss b: August 20, 1854
..... +Lafayette Hiner
..... 3 Wilhelm Frederick Joss b: October 21, 1843 d: 1869
..... 3 Henrietta Joss
..... +Frank Hiner
..... 2 Daniel Joss b: 1824 in Canton Bern, Switzerland d: in Waverly
..... +Nancy Jane Mitchell
..... 3 Rosetta Joss b: 1847
..... 3 Julia Joss